



Euroregion Baltic Executive Board Meeting Stockholm Sweden 8th November 2016



Title	Final Minutes
Submitted by	SM, International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides final minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting in Stockholm on 8 th November 2016.
Requested action	Signing

Participants:

ERB Executive Board:

Ms Akko Karlsson	ERB Vice President, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County
Mr Wiesław Byczkowski	Member of ERB Executive Board, Vice-Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region
Ms Britt-Louise Berndtsson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board of Region Kronoberg
Mr Robert Olesen	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board, Region Kronoberg, Swede
Mr Ragnar Olsson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Regional Council in Kalmar County
Mr Per Ole Petersen	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm

ERB Youth Board:

Mr Tautrimas Rupulevičius	Chair of ERB Youth Board, Association of Klaipeda Region
Ms Alexandra Winberg	Member of ERB Youth Board, Regional Council in Kalmar County/Kumulus

ERB Secretariats:

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Yana Eremeeva	Government of Kaliningrad Region
Ms Klaudija Kionies	Association of Klaipeda Region
Mr Sebastian Magier	Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat
Mr Jan Martinsson	Regional Council in Kalmar County

Ms Johanna Rönn	Region Blekinge
Ms Małgorzata Samusjew	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic
Ms Krystyna Wróblewska	Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship
Mr Piotr Zwolak	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Mr Marcin Żuchowski	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic
Ms Zofia Makowska	Regional Council in Kalmar County / CaSYPoT Project

1. **Welcome and opening**

ERB Vice President, Ms Akko Karlsson welcomed the participants and opened the meeting of the ERB Executive Board in Stockholm.

2. **Signing the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meeting**

ERB IPS has submitted the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meetings held on Bornholm on 8th June 2016.

ERB Executive Board members – Ms Akko Karlsson and Ms Britt-Louise Berndtsson signed the minutes of ERB Executive Board meeting on Bornholm.

3. **Introduction to the joint seminar on youth policies within the EUSBSR Forum**

Mr Sebastian Magier presented information on the organisation of the ERB Annual Forum of Stakeholders to be organised within the framework of the 7th Annual EUSBSRS Forum as a joint seminar of Baltic organisations (ERB, UBC, BSSSC) on the question of strategic youth policy within EUSBSR.

The focus of the presentation would be on the details of the ERB Youth Board statement and the practical execution of the seminar.

Taking this opportunity, Mr Jan Martinsson, Regional Council in Kalmar County, introduced to the Executive Board Ms Zofia Makowska - a new Project Manager working at the Regional Council on the implementation of the CaSYPoT project. The project would be working closely with the stakeholders of the three organisations engaged in the process, all the more so that both UBC and BSSSC were also included in the project partnership as Associated Partners.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

4. **Priorities of upcoming ERB Presidency**

Ms Akko Karlsson informed the ERB Executive Board about the priorities for the ERB Presidency in 2017. These would include matters related to:

- 1/ Preparation for the next year's 20th anniversary celebration of ERB,
- 2/ Cooperation in the ERB area using South Baltic Programme as a tool,
- 3/ Youth questions related to ERB Youth Board and CaSYPoT project and CaSYPoT-Ru project with Kaliningrad Region
- 4/ Water questions related to priorities in the ERB Water Core Group and also the Waternets-Ru project with Kaliningrad region.

Additionally, Ms Karlsson informed that also tourism and questions concerning the development of infrastructure would be on the ERB agenda in the coming year.

Concerning the upcoming ERB Anniversary, Mr Niels Chresten Andersen, Regional Municipality of Bornholm commented that it would be useful to use the experience from the Seagull II project as an example to follow-up on. Among other things, the project produced a publication summarising the work of ERB during first 10 years.

He also stated that it would be very good to combine the transfer of ERB Presidency with the Annual Forum.

Mr Martinsson commented that if the Executive Board agreed to this proposal, then the thematic areas of the Forum would also have to be decided.

Mr Per Ole Petersen, ERB Board Member, stated that the 20th Anniversary of ERB could gather young people of 20 years of age and discussions could concern changes that regions undergone during that time.

Mr Jan Martinsson added that the Kalmar Museum was very good at doing timeline performances and that could be used to show how ERB had changed.

Ms Britt-Louise Berndtsson, ERB Board Member, suggested that the themes for the ERB Forum could be water issues, tourism and/or youth cooperation.

Ms Alexandra Winberg, Member of ERB Youth Board, that the themes could be coupled eg. how young people take ownership in the water resources.

Mr Magier mentioned that the ERB has started a strategic cooperation on youth issues with the upcoming Norwegian Presidency of BSSSC that could also be reflected in the themes.

Mr Andersen mentioned the importance of the future Cohesion Policy for the ERB work. He also suggested that these that relevant topics such as water management, migration or environment could be better investigated via study visits, perhaps also to Norway. Also a study visit could be organised during the Board meeting in autumn.

Mr Magier added that the priorities presented would be included in detail in the next ERB Biennial Action Plan 2017-2018 submitted for approval at the Executive Board meeting in Kalmar on 6th Feb 2017.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and agreed to move the ERB Annual Forum to coincide with the transfer of ERB Presidency at the beginning of each year.

5. Information from Task Force Project Facilitation

5a. State of play - current projects with ERB participation

Mr Sebastian Magier provided a summary of the ERB involvement in ongoing / approved cross-border cooperation projects:

- CaSYPoT - Mr Jan Martinsson and Zofia Makowska (Lead Partner organisation) and Mr Sebastian Magier (WP2 Leader organisation) gave information about the implementation status of CaSYPoT project. Special focus was put on the activities already delivered in the first months such as the kick-off meeting in Emmaboda and meeting of Polish partners in Sopot. Future activities with regard to the CaSYPoT Ru project and main activities in CaSYPoT were also presented.
- Baltic Sea Tourism Centre and South Coast Baltic projects – Mr Magier stated that ERB is involved in the projects as an Associated Partner and will be closely monitoring its implementation.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

5b. ERB projects in development

Mr Sebastian Magier presented information on the development of several projects with potential ERB participation (attachments no 05b):

- Umbrella – project would focus on the developing cooperation capacities of smaller organisations and municipalities of the South Baltic area. ERB was building the partnership as the Lead Partner and was trying to involve relevant organisations from all 5 Programme countries as PPs, while also reaching outside the Programme area to gather important actors as Associated Partners. Commenting on the project, Mr Andersen encouraged the project to become more result oriented if it were to become successful. The project needed to provide concrete figures showing its contribution to the blue and green growth. Mr Martinsson stated that the Kalmar region might be interested to join in the Umbrella project. Ms Berndtsson stated that she was in favour of the project and that it should be addressed to a diverse group of stakeholders.
- Interconnect – the project was developed by Region Blekinge and concerned the development of solution favouring the use of public transportation system for cross-border travels. In the project ERB would be one of the PPs responsible for WP2 on dissemination and promotion. Mr Andersen stated that the project was relevant for ERB in the context of previous discussions on the matter. Here the focus of the project was also on the challenges to better connect Kaliningrad region. Responding to this Mr Magier stated that the project invited the Kaliningrad Region to become an Associated Partner and be engaged in its work. Ms Yana Eremeeva, Kaliningrad Regional Government, stated that the matter was referred to the Ministry of Infrastructure to investigate possibilities of joining the project. Ms Klaudija Kionies, Association of Municipalities Klaipeda Region, stated that through ERB it was possible to include regional transport company in the project, while the Association became an Associated Partners. Ms Berndtsson stated that Kronoberg could offer interesting topics for study visits within the project.
- Liquid Energy – the project was developed by German partners and concerned practical application of bio-gas in different areas of economy such as transport, heating etc. ERB would a PP without leading any of the components.
- Europe for Citizens – Mr Magier and Mr Piotr Zwolak, Marshal's Office of Warmia-Mazury Voivodeship provided more details on the funding opportunities within the upcoming calls of the EfC Programme. ERB could create a partnership of at least 4 organisations to submit a proposal to the strand 2.2 – Networks of Towns. The project could start as early as July 2017 and run for 24 months with a budget of up to 150 000 EUR and 40% advance payments.
Mr Andersen stated that the project could be very important in the view of the 20th Anniversary of ERB. He also stated that ERB with its limited resource should save some capacities for other projects. Mr Martinsson stated that the deadline for applications was near and that decisions would have to be made which organisations would be involved and who would become the LP. This work could be done at the Secretariats face-to-face meeting in Feb 2017.
- EVS Project – Mr Magier gave an overview stating the Association of Polish Communes was in the process of obtaining accreditation to send, host and coordinate EVS volunteers. Mr Andersen commented that if the project was not ready for the upcoming call, then it would be possible to submit it later.
- DUNC – the project on sustainable development of UNESCO sites in South Baltic was rejected in 1st call but it would come back in the 3rd call. The ERB was once again asked to become the Associated Partner.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and agreed to once again support the DUNC project as Associated Organisation.

5c. **Financing of joint ERB projects - ERB budget**

Mr Sebastian Magier presented the balance of ERB budget until 30th September 2016 as well as indicative cash-flow of ERB's participation in the proposed cross-border projects.

Responding to the presentation, Mr Niels Chresten Andersen stated that we would have to be aware of financial limitations of ERB and should leave some financial buffer, as project reimbursement not always are delivered on time. We should be careful not to be involved in too many projects.

Ms Małgorzata Samusjew, Association of Polish Communes, stated that the Association is aware of this and will help to facilitate the necessary financial assistance if needed, but that the ERB should also be aware of the financial commitments that are the basis for the hosting agreement.

ERB Executive Board will be requested to comment on the information presented and decide on the participation of ERB in the projects proposed.

5d. **Projects of ERB member organisations with ERB relevance**

ERB member organisation were invited to provide information about international projects in development that may be relevant to ERB cooperation. These included the Friendly House project on energy efficiency in passive buildings; South Baltic Manors focusing on preservations of historical heritage of old manor houses in the South Baltic area and SB Well focusing on sustainable tourism destination in wellness and spa sector.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented

6. **Activities within ERB Youth Board**

Mr Sebastian Magier summarised key activities taking place within the ERB Youth Board and what the IPS was doing to support youth cooperation within ERB.

Details were provided about selected activities and proposals:

- Małgorzata Samusjew of the Association of Polish Communes requested to change the age of ERB Youth Board members to 30 years to be in line with majority of EU documents on youth where the age of 30 is the limit for youth. This would entail amending the ERB Statutes in the part concerning the ERB Youth Board.
- Mr Magier presented information about YB participation in the BSSSC Annual Youth Event in Hämeenlinna in September 2016.
- Ms Alexandra Winberg gave information about YB participation in CBSS Round Table on Youth Affairs in Berlin in October 2016.

ERB Executive Board decided to approve the proposal to change ERB Statutes concerning the age limit of ERB Youth Board members to 30 years. The Board also took note of the information about the activities of the ERB Youth Board in 2016.

7. **Information from the ERB Water Core Group**

Mr Sebastian Magier updated the Board about recent activities within the ERB Water Core Group after ERB Water Forum on Bornholm.

Mr Jan Martinsson added that the WCG was also focusing now on the start of the WaterNets RU project with the partners from Kaliningrad.

Mr Marcin Żuchowski, Association of Polish Communes, stated that the Association is working on several projects within its newly developed Water Working Group.

One focuses on wetlands – SUWMAB and the other on geo-monitoring.
Mr Jan Martinsson informed that on 9th Dec 2016 there will be a seminar on creation of wetlands and geo-scanning of the island of Oland.

Ms Małgorzata Samusjew informed that the Poland-Russian CBC Programme will have a dedicated measure, where municipalities of Braniewo and Mamonvo will be working on sewage projects , while Puck and Nidzica would tackle water and tourism questions.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen pointed that Bornholm was involved in the WCG but the person responsible was working in an institution that was undergoing reorganisation. The communication within the WCG could be improved and more online meetings could take place in between regular face-to-face meetings.

Mr Żuchowski stated that the Association's Water WG was going to have a study visit in Gdańsk in January 2017 and invited the ERB to participate in it.
Ms Akko Karlsson stated that the focus during the upcoming Board meeting would be on the local/municipal level of water cooperation.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

8. Information from Interreg South Baltic Programme

Mr Sebastian Magier, Head of IPS will informed the ERB Executive Board about recent developments in the South Baltic Programme:

- Results of MC meeting in Växjö
- Changes in South Baltic Joint Secretariat and the selection of a new Head of JS
- South Baltic Annual Event in Rostock on 15-16th November 2016

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

9. Information about study visit of Swedish politicians to ERB regions

Mr Jan Martinsson, Regional Council in Kalmar County, informed the ERB Executive Board about the results of the trip of Swedish politicians from ERB Board to the regions of Pomorskie, Warmia-Mazury, Kaliningrad and Klaipeda between 29-31st Aug 2016.

The aim of the visit was to take stock of the current cooperation within and look for potential new topic for joint activities and have better focus on specific issues.

Commenting on the presentation, Ms Britt-Louise Berndtsson said that similar study visits could be organised to the Swedish ERB regions eg. to the city of Växjö which extensively promoting green solutions.

Mr Per Ole Petersen extended a similar invitation to Bornholm.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen said that such visits are of crucial importance for cooperation, contacts and networking. Bornholm has been invited to Warmia-Mazury in September and it was a very good visit with valuable contacts for further cooperation eg. on tourism and transport (new Warmia-Mazury airport).

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

10. Request for support - Association of Polish Communes and its bid to manage Global Cooperation Fund

Mr Małgorzata Samusjew, Association of Polish Communes informed the Board about the Association's bid to become the Operator of the Global Cooperation

Fund in the framework of Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the EEA Mechanism. This could be used also for further development of ERB cooperation.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

11. Article about ERB in Baltic Rim Economies

Mr Sebastian Magier, Head of ERB IPS presented a draft of an article about the activities of ERB to be published in the December edition of the Baltic Rim Economies.

Commenting on the draft, the ERB Executive Board was of the opinion that the article should focus on just one aspect of ERB cooperation, not many. It would give a better focus especially that the article could not be too long.

It was also stated that if the article was about ERB youth cooperation then it should also include the summary of discussions from the EUSBSR seminar.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

12. Participation in Baltic Leadership and Executive Programmes organised by Swedish Institute

Mr Sebastian Magier informed the Board about the involvement of the ERB in two programmes organised by the Swedish Institute – Baltic Executive Programme and Leadership Programme, with a goal to boost organisations capacities and skills in developing cooperation within the Baltic Sea Region.

ERB representation in the Baltic Executive Programme would include: Akko Karlsson, Britt-Louise Berndtsson, Per-Ole Petersen, Małgorzata Samusjew, Jan Martinsson and Sebastian Magier.

ERB Executive Board will be requested to comment and take note of the information presented.

13. Dates of ERB meetings in 2017

The ERB Executive Board discussed and decide on the dates of the ERB meetings in 2017. These are as follows:

1. 6-7 February 2017 in Kalmar Organised by Regional Council in Kalmar County also including ERB Forum, WCG and YB meetings.
2. 22-23 May 2017 – by the Association of Polish Communes in Elbląg
3. 18-19 Sept 2017 – in Klaipeda on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary of the Association of Klaipeda Region Municipalities

Commenting on the dates, Niels Chresten Andersen that Bornholm was trying to engage in Youth Board cooperation by using the Europe Direct network to organise meetings on different topics – 4 meeting for 2017. To this end he was in contact with Europe Direct CPs in Poland and Klaipeda.

14. Conclusion and closing

ERB Vice President, Ms Akko Karlsson closed the meeting of the ERB Executive Board.

